243 are then scattered from the swinging hand onto the level ground, after which some soil is sprinkled on the seed by hand. Eleusine (uwuro) is sown in the same manner. The ripe ears of these two types of millet are each individually cut from the stalks with a knife. This is also the method used for corn and rice. Then the ears are spread on the firm ground in front of the huts and threshed with switches. Some of the sorghum [252] is ground into flour, but most of it is used for brewing beer. [273] Eleusine is mainly ground into flour from which the daily ugali mush (umudsima) is made.

The Barundi grow tobacco (itabi) in small quantities near 249 almost every homestead, as has been mentioned above. The delicate plant is cared for so poorly, however, that it yields a mediocre product. Uvira tobacco, which is traded in considerable amounts in the Tanganyika area, is of much better quality. [53] The Barundi put the tobacco seeds into small holes dug into the soil with a hoe. The young seedlings are not transplanted, but the Barundi clear and irrigate the surrounding soil from time to time. As soon as the plant begins to blossom (red, not white), the leaves are picked off and strung up on bast strings to dry in the sun. Then, for fermentation and storage, they are wrapped in [redacted]na leaves. In spite of its terrible appearance, 276 the tobacco does not have a bad aroma, but it is so strong that even the Barundi seldom smoke it. In most cases it is smoked only by old men and women. The others are all inveterate snuff-takers (see p. 59), whereas in Ruanda tobacco is only rarely taken as snuff but is smoked in considerable amounts.

Tobacco is regarded by the Barundi in the same way as all [824] narcotics are regarded by primitive peoples: as possessing [758] mysterious powers. From this originates the custom of stuffing a pinch of snuff up the nose of a person who has fainted. Also, the young bridegroom blows tobacco smoke at his wife, and so forth (No. 19, p. 557).

244 Several kinds of pumpkins (imboga) are likewise grown merely as garden produce or interspersed among bananas or sorghum, in particular a variety which is round and as big as a head, and another smaller variety that looks almost like a

Their Food is Varied

262 It consists of beans, peas, and sweet potatoes. They cultivate
[241] a lot of sorghum, eleusine, and maize. In some areas one finds Caribbean cabbage or edible arum (amatcke), yam (ebikoro), squash and pumpkins, of which the people are fond. Among the mountain
[263] people, honey is also consumed in large quantities. Elsewhere, the Muhutu /sing. of Bahutu/ brings honey to the Mututsi /sing. of Batutsi/,
[272] who demands it as a due and uses it to make hydromel (inkangaza and intoramo), the favorite beverage of the nobles.

The banana, which the Munyarwanda /sing. of Banyarwanda/
[273] frequently mixes with his other foods, supplies him primarily with a beer that is in great demand (inzoga y'urwagwa).

263 The Banyarwanda, in order to lend taste and flavor to their everyday food and to their favorite dishes, add to them bitter plants or sour, tart fruits, which they cook along with them (1). Housewives

[824]

1. Among all these plants, issogi is the one most commonly used. The shrubs that bear the berries most valued for their bitter taste are intagashya and igitagarasoryo.

also use water containing a little potash /33/, which takes the place
258 of the missing salt. The Blacks draw this mediocre seasoning from
263 the ashes of plants that grow in the marshes (1). These grasses are

[824]

1. The natives call these grasses by the name of umuberanyi, umurago, and igikangaga. The ashes of the last-mentioned plant are most commonly used.

burned after being dried in the sun. The ashes are then collected in a large potsherd upon which the humble African salt makers pour pure

769 This explains his invocations, offerings, and libations before the hood-shaped shelter that contains the angered spirit who was pointed out to him.

784 The Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ is bound by the law of taboos (imiziro).

He may not smoke or sit on a chair during a thunderstorm. A woman may not use a billhook to cut grass. She may eat only cow meat. The flesh of certain animals is forbidden, /56/ in some cases to every Munyarwanda, in others to certain clans only. The objects used by a deceased person and the food that was in the hut at the time of his death are taboo. At the end of the mourning period, all these things will be purified with lustral water. The widow herself will have to go through the rites of purification.

Work is forbidden on certain days. The relatives of a deceased person give up all their occupations for four or five days.

Upon the death of the king, all work in the fields is prohibited for three months. In certain parts of Ruanda, one stops work for one day when a child is born, when a hut has burned down, when there has been a hailstorm, even when a dog has died. Some taboos only affect the king.

763 The burial method peculiar to the Banyarwanda, which incidentally is shared by other African peoples, must now be mentioned. When a sick person is about to die and spreads his arms and legs, his relatives bring his knees up to the chin. His arms are bent at the elbows and his hands are made to cover his face.

764 This crouching position is the absolute rule among pagans. It is not far-fetched to state that this most uncomfortable position, when forced on a dying person, makes breathing very difficult and shortens his last moments.

● [824] In the right hand of the deceased, one places the leaves of plants with magical properties, ishoza, umulembe, umwishwa, seeds of squash, sorghum, and issogi, and lamb's wool. All these things are symbols explained by the following words pronounced on this occasion, "Return to us as a limb (with the sweetness of a lamb)! Return to us without thorns (like the plants, soft to the touch, that we have given thee), that is to say, without mean intentions."

644 According to popular belief, this choice is made in a very interesting
643 manner. The umbilical cords of the young princes are buried separate-
787 ly in pots of ficus wood (umwuko), with gourd, sorghum, eleusine, and native spinach (issogi) seeds planted all around them (1). The

[824]

[252]

[415]

1. These seeds are designated by the name of mbuto nkuru, that is to say, "the major seeds." Eleusine and sorghum play an important role in the diet by yielding a sort of native bread. Spinach is also highly valued because of the flavor it lends to the beans with which it is cooked. The Banyarwanda also include in this category the seeds of a special gourd called inzungwane, which is hollowed out when ripe. It is used to store beer, and it is this relationship to pombe, so highly appreciated by the natives, which lends so much importance to the seed.

According to another popular belief, the successor to the throne is the one among the king's sons born with the "major seeds" in his right hand.

After subjugating the Bahutu by force, the Hamites insured their obedience by exploiting their credulity.

future holder of the drum is pointed out by the most plentiful harvest. According to these naive people, the umbilical cords are /376/ then discarded except for that of the crown prince, which must be preserved (1).

784 A young girl may not follow the path trodden by cows while her betrothal arrangements are being made. She must take another [842] path in order not to risk becoming sterile.

When a hut is finished and covered with thatch, the wife of the hut's owner must bring into it with her own hands the household spatula, which, according to the customs of the land, is her own symbolic weapon and safeguard. The observation of this rite insures her of not being expelled from the hut and of living on good terms with her husband.

To forget one's stick at a neighbor's house is a worrisome thing. It is to be feared that the stick will be used for magic procedures against the owner of the forgotten object.

787 If your heart beats as if it were about to break in the chest, it is a sign that someone is speaking ill of you somewhere.

If your chest feels heavy, if you feel ill in the stomach, it is a sign that your sister-in-law is pregnant and will become a mother.

An itching felt at the spot where a drop of blood was taken to seal a friendship pact is a certain portent of the blood-brother's death.

789 In order to help a litigant's suit along, his relatives wrap a 691 mwishwa stalk around his chair. /415/ During the proceedings of the case, a member of the family sits on the chair and sweeps all around it, as if to ward off an evil spell. For even greater certainty of success, one also places under the chair the whetting stone (ityazo), which is called "obstacle" (ikinanira) in sorcerers' terms. This symbolic act has the function of stripping away all the effectiveness of the other side's testimony and evidence. "Their words will go with the wind" (amagambo yabo azahita nk' umuyaga), as popular belief has it.

[273] The plaintiff, on his part, must abstain from drinking beer made with bananas of the kind called iginyambiba or igihuna. Thanks to such precautions, he will have every chance of success.

784 There also exist taboo plants and shrubs. Mwange (umwange) ●824 is a plant with a symbolic and meaningful name derived from a verb (kwanga), which means "to hate, to detest, not to like." Girls must never touch it when gathering dry twigs or dead wood for the hearth, for fear of... remaining spinsters. Old women alone have ceased to fear it and do not hesitate to use it for their cooking needs (1).

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1. The Blacks set great store by plants with magic properties. It would be easy to make up a long list of them. A whole separate study could be made about them, in view of the number and importance of popular beliefs concerning the vegetable world. "From the most humble herbs to the largest trees," says Fr. Sébillot, "/plants/ play a role which for many years has drawn the interest of scholars." (Le Folklore /Folklore/.)

783 2. "Spear purifiers" (abahanyi b' amachumu) and their exorcisms.

The word umuhanyi, plural abahanyi, comes from the verb guhana, which means literally "to punish, to reprimand." It is only in a figurative sense that it means "to purify." The word guhanula is used to describe the performance of the purifying rites. /416/

The spear purifier exercises his functions at the time of a murder or assassination.

He is called upon by the victim's relatives to give satisfaction to the dead person and the members of his family by aiding them to obtain justice for the spilt blood with his mysterious procedures. He purifies the spear or death weapon with the aim of preventing or arresting the fatal consequences which the murder would not fail to involve for the dead person's relatives. The latter, fearing that they will undergo the same fate as their dead kinsman, call upon the sorcerer. He often works simultaneously with the "conjurer of spirits" (umushyitsi, umuhamagazi), who also has a role to play at this time, and sometimes both functions are filled by the same man. Among other rites, for we do not intend to describe them all (they would be more pertinent to a study dealing exclusively with funeral ceremonies), we shall cite only those pertaining to the role and function of the "spear purifier."

789 The sorcerer mutilator cuts off a tiny piece (isonga) from the tongue,
751 heart, little finger (umuhera), and skin, and these pieces are dried above the hearth. All of this is then enclosed in a small horn, preferably black, which the assassin wears around his neck as a talisman and which guards him not only against his victim but also against the latter's relatives.

It is also good to procure some of the herb called irago or umurago which has been planted on the slain man's grave. /420/ If this is added to the other gruesome items contained by the horn, the talisman becomes more powerful.

We may add that these people charge very high fees for their services. A bull, at least, is required.

C. Sorcerers who preside over ordeals and who prepare the
695 test poisons. Sorcerers of this type bear the name of Abashozi, hence the verbs gushora, "to put someone through a test," and gushoka (a neutral verb) to designate the test itself.

It does seem that here in Ruanda ordeals are employed only in criminal cases and that their sole object is to prove the innocence or culpability of those who submit to them, as was formerly done in the Middle Ages. Our Blacks have such faith and trust in such judicial methods that they believe in their absolute effectiveness. They have never given a thought to the absurdity of those divinatory tests, in which chance and fraud play such a predominant role.

Such tests are numerous, but the most widespread is that which
695 consists of drinking or smoking the urwizilinga, a kind of shrub that
278 seems to bear at least a superficial resemblance to datura (1). In any

[824]

1. Moavi is used as the test poison practically throughout the rest of Africa. This plant does not seem to exist in Ruanda. The matter, nevertheless, would be worth investigating.

case their effects are similar.

766 821 In principle, the corpse may not be buried. Whenever possible, it must be taken to a mountain, a hill, or some other elevated spot, to meet the king of the sky who chose to honor him (Yamukujije) by calling upon him. In the Gissaka province, the body is left on an old termite nest.

[152] Rejoicing is the rule for the duration of the ceremonies. The close relatives must join in this novel festival with /437/ dances and joyful cries in spite of their grief. If the deceased was a man, it is said that the king of the sky made him his chosen subject. If a woman 588 or young girl was involved, she was chosen as his wife. This belief 766 had become so ingrained that if the unfortunate woman recovered 821 she could not be taken in marriage by anyone but the king. In the more distant provinces, she was regarded as having actually become the wife of lightning. She was then treated as a widow or divorcée, that is to say, her "second marriage" (guchùra) was carried out as simply as possible, without any of the ceremonies that go with the wedding (kulongora) of a young girl.

766 821 [824] 783 Before leaving, the purifier-sorcerer stuck a ficus branch into the ground at the spot of the accident, along with a bough of red-blooming erythrina (umwuko), a reed, and a stalk each of ishoza, umurembe, ifubge, ilalire, urubamba, etc., to purify the spot and avert any future consequences.

821 231 791 796 2. The role of the purifier-sorcerer when domestic animals have been struck down by lightning. The corpses of the animals, cows, goats, sheep, are left on the spot. No one may touch them before the sorcerer arrives. If the accident occurred in the evening and his services could not be requisitioned in time, watchmen spend the night near the victims to guard them from hyenas and prowlers.

On the following morning at daybreak, people gather at the scene of the accident and beat drums as a sign of rejoicing. As in the preceding case, the sorcerer twice offers a liquid substance of his own making to each of the bystanders, and makes them inhale another.

Husbands must secure a few drops and bring them to the wives who remained at home. /438/ The bodies of the victims are also copiously sprinkled with it.

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Umumkari	Umugore	Woman
Umwere wa giti	Umwana	Child

The cabalistic language of the initiates is not exactly refined. It would hardly be decent to list all the terms in their vocabulary.

Various Impositions on Subjects and Clans

644 Aside from the majordomos, stewards, and couriers (intumwa), one also finds at court the innumerable caterers to His Majesty.

It may be said as a general statement that everyone works for the king: architects, professional builders, weapon makers, blacksmiths, mat manufacturers, basket weavers, potters, tanners, tailors of colobus pelt garments, furnishers of scented wood (3), veterinarians,

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3. The scented wood umugehsi, when converted into shavings called imibavu, is used to perfume butter.

At the time of the last volcanic eruption in 1912, the king had large quantities of this wood burnt to purify the air, which was tainted by sulphurous vapors.

bleeders of /457/ cows, butchers, and other artisans of all types.

224 644 Even the official "rat catchers" come regularly to carry out their duties, like the members of other corporations. Instead of being designated by the ordinary name of "trap setters" or "rat catchers," they are known by the euphemistic term of "sons-in-law" (abakwe), who come to marry (ngo baje kulongora). This is done so as not to arouse the suspicion of the rats when those important persons come to court.

237 272 438 The honey which the king and dignitaries use frequently in the form of hydromel, their favorite beverage (inkangaza), comes chiefly from the mountainous regions rich in flowers and trees.

644 727 Among the other families who played a role at court, we may cite the aBasingo, Batchaba, and aBagessera. The Basingo, a subdivision of the powerful Biru clan, fulfill a special function in wartime along with the "Cursers" (Abahenyi).

They are in charge of "closing the path" to the enemy (gukingir' ababisha) by gathering all the monsters, real or fancied, who [787] are regarded by the Blacks as evil portents and therefore designated by the term intsiro. This covers chiefly black goats, black chicks whose entrails were found to "turn black" when examined by the diviners, that is to say, unfavorable to the enemy, dissolute mothers (ibinyandaro), children born out of wedlock, children born during the mourning period held for one of their relatives (umwana w'amabi), young girls with undeveloped breasts (impenebere), old women who remained sterile through life (umugetchuru w'igicha mbyaro), and other true monsters with real and visible defects, who are designated by the generic name of ibimara or ibimazi.

644 342 The aBatchaba, another branch of the great /460/ aBiru family, select and measure the sites of royal huts. They hang in the interior of the hut, and later fasten outside, some branches of trees with magic properties (1) which according to popular belief exercise a

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1. Among those plants or trees with magic properties, we may cite the ficus (umuvumu), the red-bloom erythrina (umuko), the plant called irarire, etc.

salutary influence over the inhabitants or owners of the huts. It is the duty of their wives and daughters to meet the victorious warriors, singing and dancing, and thus congratulate them for their feats of valor. They also take part in the traditional celebrations which are held when the king takes official possession of a newly built hut and enters it for the first time with a wife chosen especially for the occasion (2).

754 and cite numerous examples to this effect. On the other hand, the ingredients used in their manufacture are not yet sufficiently known.

754 278 At best, one hears popular rumors of snakes, toads, human cadavers (imirundi y' abapfuye, n' ingobyi z' abana), crocodiles, etc., whose putrefied flesh was used. The Blacks are also convinced that the lungs of tuberculars are used to transmit the disease to other [164] people (1).

1. This illness is widespread among the Batutsi, who greatly fear it.

They know full well that it is fatal. Hence their great [578] curse, "May you die of tuberculosis!" (uragichwa n' igituntu).

According to popular belief, those lungs are dried out and crushed to powder so as to be slipped more easily into the drinking tube which is used to drink native beer. Menstrual blood (irungu), [841] which inspires in them an intense fear and an acute aversion, is popularly believed to cause slow poisoning when administered to an enemy. It is mixed in with his food secretly. There is also mention of poisonous juices, such as the milk of various kinds of euphorbia [824 847] (imiyenzi, imiduha, etc.) and of certain other plants, for example, muhoko, which is also used to induce abortions. Cactus milk and muhoko juice could only induce death in such quantities that the person involved would not fail to detect them while drinking. It is difficult, therefore, to make frequent use of those substances.

278 824 The Banyarwanda also regard as toxic /488/ the following plants: urwizilinga, umutambasha, and igisura. As we mentioned earlier, urwizilinga is a shrub somewhat similar to datura. It is the plant whose juice or powdered bark is used in trials by ordeal. The umutambasha is another shrub whose leaves are crushed to extract [224] the juice. The Banyarwanda use it to kill rats by mixing it with the food that is used as bait for those rodents.

278 Igisura belongs to the Urticaceae family.

824 This plant grows to a height of about 1.50 meters. Sufferers from yaws drink its juice as a remedy. They must be careful not to take too heavy a dose, so as not to risk a serious intoxication.

It is rumored that ill-disposed people have used one or another of those plants, and in particular the mutambasha, or rat poison, to wreak their vengeance and do away with their enemies.

754 Small packets of herbs were found in the possession of people
609 suspected of practicing the poisoner's vocation.

For what purpose had those plants been gathered? Perhaps the sorcerer had tried to lend them a harmfulness which of themselves they did not possess. Backbiters in the land insist that once at least royal hands mixed those allegedly noxious substances into milk, honey, and butter intended for Europeans who were passing through. The said person achieved no results, however, and this led him /or her/ to say that it was impossible to get rid of the Whites, that poisons, spells, and bewitchment had no hold over them. We are inclined to believe that in this case charms and philters were involved rather than noxious substances.

754 It is said that the penultimate king of the Uswi, Gasusuro,
178 one of the regular suppliers of such products, replied to the court envoys one fine day when they came to fetch the goods that henceforth he would not supply them, that he was through with all poisons. It is also quite /489/ possible that his answer was dictated by the fear of being caught practicing this vocation. Let us add for the sake of truthfulness that the days are long since past when such things could be said or plotted against Europeans (1).

1. The Blacks live in the almost constant fear of bewitchment and poisoning.

[761] Rickets, tuberculosis, and sudden or strange deaths, especially when the corpse swells up immediately, could have no other cause in their opinion.

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How many unfortunate people payed with their lives for having been falsely accused of such supposed misdeeds!

789 The use of charms to win the good graces of Europeans survived
648 only by a few years the use of the above-mentioned poisons. When the latter were tagged as ineffective /to Europeans/, or at least dangerous in their consequences, charms (inzaratsi) were resorted to. The makers of charms, called by the generic name of Abanyamihango, "men of the traditions," exercise a vocation which is regarded as lucrative and honorable as long as the professionals do not overstep the limits of their art.

Public opinion indeed accuses them, most probably wrongly, of deceiving people and giving them poison instead of inoffensive
832 charms. Women, especially, resort to their art and use their powders
278 to draw upon themselves the attention and favors of an unfaithful or forgetful husband. Sorcerers in this category use for this purpose the following plants and shrubs: umukunde, which bears the evocative
● [824] name of "tree of love," umutanga, umugobora, umukeri, a kind of wild bramble, nkurimonga, umuhire, buryoher' imfizi, that is, "the plant that suits the taste of bulls," etc. The makers of philters take the bark, leaves, or roots of those plants and dry them in the sun. The whole thing is crushed and reduced to powder. One need only put a little of this powder into beer or butter, or else /490/ rub it onto a stick or spear, to obtain the desired effect. The neglected wife who manages to make her husband drink this beer will inevitably regain
[302] first place in his heart. The result is the same if the husband anoints his limbs and body with the butter containing the precious powder.

789 The use of a walking stick or the bearing of a spear rubbed
648 with one of those powders will bring good luck to the owner. His words and requests will all be accepted, and those he addresses will be unable to do him any harm.

This is why the king and court dignitaries attempted in their turn to use this simple and effective means of winning over the hearts of the Europeans and of swaying them toward their own needs and

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home, on the advice of his familiars, in a hut that stood nearby. The sorcerers assured him that he had nothing more to fear on the part of the spirits, who had been given full satisfaction by means of this trick.

643 Upon the accession of each new king to the throne, a special envoy went to the Ruzizi Valley and drew water from a spring called Zina. He took some of that water and brought it for the young monarch to drink.

The reasons for this custom, which has now fallen into disuse, have been forgotten.

Chapter 6

I. The Two Great Festivals at Court

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The two most important celebrations (ibirori) take place at the official presentation of the "First Fruits," and on the day following the annual mourning period, which the king and his court must observe.

This latter feast, which closes the month of June, is celebrated with the same pomp and richness. Since it will be described in the chapter dealing with honors rendered to the spirits of the royal dead, we shall discuss here only the festival called "First-Fruits" festival.

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In their enthusiasm and admiration for Ruganzu II, the Victorious, the Banyarwanda go so far as to credit him with almost every food plant or grain they possess. Special mention is made of sorghum, eleusine, and a kind of wild plant /499/ known by the name of issogi (1), owing to their importance in the local economy.

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1. The Banyarwanda prepare the stem and leaves of issogi as though it were spinach.

Their introduction into Ruanda by the great monarch is the subject of numerous tales that are more or less contradictory.

We shall cite only the best-known ones.

"A chief in the Bumbogo country," according to one tradition, "had abducted and married Ruganzu's sister to his great dissatisfaction, and he had sworn to wreak a signal vengeance upon him. In order to appease the wrath of his royal brother-in-law, the abductor thought it best to send him envoys with gifts. Among the latter were several baskets of sorghum and eleusine, which were then unknown in Ruanda.

"The king recognized their importance and forgave the offender forthwith, but laid upon him the obligation of bringing one basketful of each plant to the capital every year. The king distributed the first consignments among the chiefs and advised them to plant them and watch over their growth."

According to another version, Ruganzu was passing through the Bumbogo when he saw an ant (imonyo) dragging a handsome grain along the path. He pointed this out to one of his followers. "Look at this ant," he said. "Let's see what it is holding in its mouth." The Banyarwanda had never seen a grain like that one.

The king ordered it to be preserved with care.

Upon his return to the capital he had it planted in the ground. Six months later a handsome ear was harvested, and its grains were sowed anew. Two years later the harvest was such that the precious grain could be distributed to a number of persons. The cultivation of this cereal, which /500/ was given the name of sorghum, soon spread throughout Ruanda.

On another occasion when Ruganzu was traveling across the same land of Bumbogo, he suddenly stopped before a hut from which there emanated a delicious cooking odor. "What could be the food that gives forth such a delicious aroma?" he exclaimed. The woman of the household invited the prince to come in, uncovered the pot, and showed him the famous issogi plant (spinach) that she was cooking

Sacred Cows

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778 The idea for this select group is traced back to Ruganzu. These special herds are known as inyambo, or long-horned cattle, and they are always selected among the finest in the land. They are not all of the same color.

Among other hues, the following predominate: dusty red (ibihogo by' issine), purplish red (ibihogo by' igaju), red speckled with [822] white (ibihogo by' imyeru), and black and white, which are all favorite colors of the Batutsi.

Special cowherds are in charge of watching over those herds, which usually graze in the Buganza.

They are led to the capital for festivals or public celebrations. The finest animals, known as inyamibga or indatwa /510/ (from the word kurata, "to show off"), lead the herd.

There is usually only one or two of these in each herd, and they are accustomed to walking ahead of the others. Their horns, brow, and neck are covered with rows of beads and small antelope horns which serve as ornaments (imitako n' imiheha). Also included [824] are stems of the sacrosanct umwishwa grass, which the cowherds also wear on chest and head on numerous occasions. Then special [535] dances take place which are organized by the keepers of the herd or even by the Batwa and in which the animals participate with their mooing.

The cows are quite familiar with this kind of sport, and they seem to take an interest in it and watch the motions of the dancers. The latter emit special guttural cries all the while, in order to excite the animals further.

Performances of this sort are highly esteemed by the Banyarwanda and attract large crowds.

After the celebration the sacred cows return to their Buganza pastures. Their keepers treat them with great care and are the only ones permitted to milk them, just as they are the only ones to drink their milk.

The calves are gorged with milk and weaned quite late.

[262] Although the Banyarwanda are extremely fond of meat and even eat animals who died a natural death, they are strictly forbidden

643 There must have been few kings who benevolently left this life of their own accord.

Popular belief has accepted too many fables on the subject. It was still said recently that Queen Mother Nyiramavugo, a grandmother of King Lwabugiri who must have died around 1860, was the first to refuse the poison when old age drew near in spite of the dictates of custom and tradition. "Since that day, " say the common people, "the Abiru, or keepers of the customs, who are in charge of this task and duty have not dared mention it anymore to kings and queens. "

2. The Corpse of the Royal Dead is "Smoked"

766 "When a king died, " the same people go on, "two Batutsi
643 from important families were seized and killed forthwith near the body. " This was called "to make the king's pillow" (gusegurir' umwami). Those men were given to him to accompany and serve him in the spirit world.

[641] A subject counts for nothing while the king is all important. It is proper, therefore, to send him at least two men chosen from the highest social stratum.

"They did not dare observe this rite, " add the narrators, "at the death of the last king, Lwabugiri (in 1895). " /517/

When a queen mother died, two great ladies of the same (Mututsi) /Batutsi/ race were sacrificed. It is the Banyamugogo, or [767] "men with the big (mourning) log, " who are in charge of funeral ceremonies. They make up the royal corporation of undertakers, although their name does not indicate this outright. They are called "men with the big (mourning) log, " owing to the custom which demands that a wooden log be burned for three or four days after the [824] death of an individual. For this purpose, one deliberately chooses a green log of red-bloom erythrina (umuko), a symbolic tree that recalls the death of Ryangombe, the alleged founder of the famous secret society of initiates (imandwa).

The body of the dead king is transported from his last home, [823] which will henceforth be called Gisozi ("Big hill") (1), to one of the

643 765 All work in the fields is strictly forbidden. The chiefs were in charge of this, and in order to show their zeal they would not have hesitated to kill on the spot any wretch who would have gone so far as to violate custom. If the fields were already plowed, one might [689] at best sow the seeds or plant the seedlings, but the hoe could not be used.

[731] A stick had to be used to dig up sweet potatoes from the ground. It is not overly surprising to hear that sometimes, in the past, famine resulted from this forced period of cessation of work.

II. Royal Tombs and Sacred Groves (Cemeteries and Former Capitals)

1. Origin and Constitution of the Sacred Groves

766 778 Afther the death of a king, as we have said, his body is taken into one of the sacred groves where a large hut is built to shelter the remains and to mummify them by desiccated prior to burial.

A courtyard is also built, enclosed with ficus branches which soon take root and which later give rise to a new thicket. Once the job of smoking is completed, the keepers of the hut bury what is left of the body inside the dwelling.

They remain there for some time afterward to prevent any desecration which they believe might still be committed. When the four months of mourning are over, the house is abandoned and the door is carefully barricaded on the outside.

The hut will stand for three, four, or even five years, /523/ and will eventually fall to pieces with age without anyone worrying about it. Before they leave, the royal undertakers plant inside the courtyard a branch of erythrina (umwuko) in honor of Ryangombe, [824] the alleged founder of the secret society of initiates (imandwa), and a ficus (umuvumu) branch to recall the majesty of kingship (ngo n' umwami) by the height of its trunk and the span of its branches and leaves. The funeral grove is henceforth created or, if it already existed, a further unit is added, which in time will be one with the others.

766 The sacred groves are numerous, and it is surprising to find
778 them most everywhere, even in the most deserted areas.

Royal cemeteries and former residences are legion. There is
778 not one province in Ruanda that does not boast several of them at
766 least.

They are found even in bordering lands which were invaded
644 more than once by the Banyarwanda. Their numbers are understandable if one recalls the nomadic life of the warrior kings such as Ruganzu and Lwabugiri, who did not sleep often under the same roof. The sovereign had only to spend the night in a hut along the way for the spot to become sacred from then on. The owners had to abandon their dwelling and go elsewhere or build at the side. The ficus branches which fenced in the courtyard went on growing and created a new sacred grove (ikigabiro).

These groves are made up of various tree species, with the
[894] ficus usually predominating. Several types of this tree are found: imigobge, imilehe, imikobe, imitabataba, etc.

The bark of the last two trees is used to make a kind of cloth
[287] which wears out rapidly (impuzu). Those clumps of trees, which are almost invariably green and which loom into sight here and there, contrast with the bareness of the land, /524/ especially in the Nduga, and lend it a characteristic appearance which does not lack a certain charm.

Among the sacred groves, some of which stand on the tallest hills, only eight or nine at most are known to have been used as royal burial grounds. The others mark the sites of former royal capitals and recall the successive moves occasioned by the numerous expeditions undertaken in certain reigns. They are referred to by the generic name of ibigabiro, or "places of distribution," from the word kugabira, "to distribute" or "to offer as a gift." As we can see, the term ibigabiro, or "places of distribution," is quite suited etymologically to the tree clumps which mark the sites of the former royal dwellings, whose owners, by virtue of their absolute ownership and power, could mete out all sorts of favors to their subjects. It was only by extension that the same name was quite wrongly applied to the royal cemeteries. Indeed, custom does not allow the popular

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There are trees, however, that are associated with remembrance of the dead. These trees were planted either by them or in connection with them, usually in the settlements. Thus, at the birth of a child a fig tree is planted, which is later associated with the person, even after his death. It seems that in these trees, as on the hedges of abandoned settlements, spirits of the dead abide.

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Trees are also planted in memory of historical events. Thus, Dr. Kandt (1) says: "At the end of the bridge (cliff bridge of the

1. Kandt, R., Caput Nili (Berlin, 1904), p. 365.

Ruzizi) there is still standing a young fig tree, an immana, a soul tree, which was planted by Luabugiri, the former king of Ruanda, when he set out to fight against Bunjabungu which is on the right bank. There is a steep, almost perpendicular path of a few hundred meters, down which he and his warriors set out to their destruction. On the tree hang straw and metal rings, the offerings of pious wanderers, and on the bridge people point out the footprint of the king's favorite dog in the cliff and tell a legend similar to the one about the Rosstrappe [Tr., a rock in the Harz Mountains]."

With reference to another type of memorial tree which is only indirectly connected with historical personages, Dr. Kandt (2)

2. Ibid., p. 504.

says: "They (trees on the eastern point of the lake) are sacred because King Luabugiri camped on this spot when he set out on his campaign against Bunjabungu (1894), from which he returned to Ruanda a dying man.... The boat that carried the ruler into the war is still lying under the trees, half buried in the ground. It was hollowed out from a giant tree of the primeval forest, but now it is split down the middle, partly rotted, and disintegrating more and more each year. As I remember, it is about 18 meters long and one and a quarter meters wide."

The memorial trees looming up on the heights are very characteristic of the Ruanda landscape. They are conspicuous because they form such a contrast to the bare hilltops. Their

778 religious character was already known through Captain Hermann,
●824 and they are referred to simply as Imana trees.
211 It seems to be chiefly the Batutsi who venerate the memorial trees. The fig trees on the heights are most numerous and most beautiful in places where the Batutsi have the greatest power. On the other hand, it is said that sometimes at night Bahutu secretly take wood from the sacred trees. The Batwa, who fear no one and who have also preserved their independence in spiritual matters, do [301] this quite openly in the daytime, but there are not enough of them to destroy the trees and change the landscape.

776 Imana and Batabazi. In our general discussion of the inter-lacustrine region [not translated], we pointed out that the spirits of dead kings and rulers have a special place among the manes. They are distinguished from the undifferentiated mass of bazimu by their greater power. They are known and feared in larger circles. This is the case, for example, with the spirit of Kimeni in Kissaka. It is not impossible that from this we shall be able to explain the contrast between the rule of Ryangombe in the underworld, which seems to be patterned after the organization of Batutsi states, and the familial anarchy of the ordinary manes. However, it is doubtful whether the central figure of the Ruanda pantheon, the creator of the world, Imana, can be associated with the spirits of the dead. He probably must be considered as derived from foreign influence. Perhaps this also explains the underworld residence of the court of Ryangombe, whereas the rest of the bazimu remain with their living relatives.

776 Imana is the lord of lightning, thunder, and rain. One ad-
782 dresses him with the words: "Nabone Imana yandemie ikalema tata, na sokokuru, na sokuruza, na mukaka, na mukakuruzu, na mama. Ikankiza, nkuko yabakidjidji! (Favor me, Imana, who created my father, and my grandfather, and the father of my grandfather, and my grandmother, and the mother of my grandmother, and my mother. He has healed me, how he has healed me!)"

No sacrifices are made to Imana. Thus, he plays no part in the cult and satisfies only, if we may so express it, a philosophical need.

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girl's father, allowing a sufficient time for the latter to consult his patrilineage. If the answer was favourable, the meeting took place. Accompanied by a kinsman or a client, the boy's father came to visit the girl's father and offered him a jug of beer. After some preliminary talk, he came to the point and asked for the girl.

These preliminary steps were taken very skilfully. Nobody should ever be directly refused. If the girl's kinsfolk did not want the match, the visit of the boy's father was indefinitely delayed under several pretexts. Nobody should be put in such a position as to lose face. The boy and the girl were never officially consulted during these preparatory stages. If, however, one of them categorically refused the choice made, he was not obliged to marry. But it happened very rarely and the opposition of the individual concerned had to be extremely persistent if it was to succeed.

To marry a certain girl against the consent of one's own and her parents was impossible. But the following procedure could be attempted. The boy hid himself in a place to which he knew the girl would go. When she was coming he spat in her face a certain herb which had been chewed and mixed with milk (*imbazi*). They were then considered married as this was the central rite of any wedding. Often the ordinary wedding ceremonies followed. If, however, the girl's inzu were still opposed to that match, they obliged the girl to whistle and milk a cow. As both these actions were tabooed for a married woman, it was clearly meant that the girl was not married. The boy's father had then to pay a fine to the girl's people as a reparation for the wrong done to the girl's family.[5]

In secondary marriages (any marriage subsequent to the first one) there were not many more cultural criteria determining the choice of the spouse. Sororal polygyny was permitted but rare. In order to obtain new connexions the husband preferred to choose subsequent wives from an inzu other than that of his first wife Another reason given is that to have two or three sisters as wives brought more domestic troubles than wives who were not consanguineal relatives. If, however, his first wife was sterile, the husband was likely to ask for one of her sisters or parallel cousins as a second wife, without paying bride-wealth. But this was not a sororate, for the first wife's sister was not said to give birth to children for her sister: she was regarded as bearing them for herself.

[5] See description of other forms of this type of marriage in Pauwels, 1951, pp. 126-9.

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Bride-wealth was definitely not a compensation for the economic loss entailed by the girl's departure from her patrilineage. Her departure was not an impoverishment of her group because it provided it with a new alliance with another descent group; all informants agree on that. Bride-wealth was the socially recognized symbol of the legitimate transfer of fertility from one descent group to another. As long as bride-wealth had not been given, children borne by the woman were considered as belonging to her inzu (they are called *nkuli*). The husband was only their genitor, not their pater.

Bride-wealth received by the girl's father was not to be used only to provide the bride's brother with a wife. There was no direct relation between a man's possibility of getting a wife and his sister's marriage.

The wedding ceremonies

Wedding ceremonies (*ubukwe*) taking place at the groom's father's were very long and complicated. The central rite constituting the wedding was the spitting on the bride's head of chewed herbs mixed with milk, and the placing on her head of a garland made of the leaves of a certain plant (*umuwishywa*). Other rites symbolized the dominance of the patrilineages' interests in the marriage. Both inzu were represented by two groups, the *abashyitsi*, the agnatic relatives of the bride, and *abasangwa*, agnatic relatives of the groom. When the rite was accomplished, *abashyitsi* had to express sorrow by their laments and *abasangwa* to rejoice loudly. Another rite stressed the concern of the kin-groups in the intimate relations between the spouses. A younger brother or paternal parallel cousin of the bride had to lie between the new spouses during some part of their first night together (*gucahagati*). The groom had to beg him to leave. I was told that this signified that it was the bride's patrilineage which had to give permission for the first intercourse. Moreover, after the central rite and before the first intercourse, the father and mother of the groom and the father and mother of the bride had to have sexual relations. If the girl's parents (who did not attend the wedding party) were living far away, the young couple sometimes had to wait for a couple of days before having intercourse.[6]

The high value of virginity was also symbolically stressed.

[6] On wedding celebration, see Kagame, 1954, pp. 143-72.

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woman's divorce was not yet completely settled (i.e. if the exchange of marriage-gifts and counter-gifts had not taken place), the former husband was still regarded as a pater of the child and the genitor had to pay him the child-wealth, if he wanted to have the child.

My male informants affirmed not to know of any contraceptives and they did not think that women knew better. In Ruanda culture, they would probably have been used exclusively for premarital relations. One informant, however, stressed the fact that too many pregnancies were bad for very poor people not having enough cow-milk and goat-milk to give to their babies, who then often died from malnutrition or from intestinal diseases (goat-milk was regarded as vermifugal). A certain herb called *umuhoko* was known for its abortive effects and used sometimes by pregnant unmarried girls with the help of their mother.

(*d*) *Socialization*

The young Ruanda spent the first years of his life in his mother's compound. There the first stages of the long process of his socialization, which was completed only after he had achieved marriage and parenthood, took place.

In matters of education, as in others, the supreme authority in the compound was the father. The paternal uncle could discipline his nephews and nieces only when they were in his compound or when the father was not present. His role was that of a substitute for the father. The maternal uncle had no authority except where the bride-wealth had not been paid. The mother had no authority of her own and had to be backed up by the father. It is clear, however, that in everyday life and particularly when the children were young, the mother was a disciplinarian and the main agent of socialization.

The training for the different activities expected to be mastered by any member of his caste began early for the child. From weaning (when they were about two years old) to the age of five, children were supposed to be clean, quiet, and not to wander far from the compound. Not later than five years old, children began to collect wood, to carry water, to watch goats and calves. A ten-year-old boy was taught how to handle a hoe and worked with his father in the fields. A girl learned how to light a fire, to brush, and to carry out the household duties of a woman. Boys from twelve to